

# NEC ACTION REPORT

National Economic Council, Inc., 7501 Empire State Bldg., New York 1, N. Y.

No. 2

## NEW YORK CITY SCHOOLS OPENED TO COMMUNISTS

### "Alertness Credits" Given Teachers Who Attend Communist Front Lectures

By a vote of five to two, New York City's Board of Education said on Oct. 28th that it is all right for Communists to hold meetings in Public School buildings. It did so in defeating a resolution by board member George A. Timone which would have denied all Nazi, Fascist, Communist and Communist-front organizations permission to use school premises.

Since it would be hard, even with a fine-toothed comb, to find any Nazi or Fascist organizations, the vote constituted in effect full authorization to Communists to use the schools for meetings.

The resolution was supported by many patriotic and civic organizations. It was opposed by a coalition of left-wing and pro-Communist groups. Among those favoring the ban were, the American Legion, Catholic War Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Knights of Columbus, Teachers Alliance of New York City, the Elks, Hibernians and Red Men.

Opposed were Manhattan Communist city council member Peter V. Cacchione (who died suddenly Nov. 6th), who, with Michael J. Quill, Eugene P. Connolly and Stanley M. Isaacs represented the "Progressive Citizens of America"; Americans for Democratic Action; Teachers Guild; Greater N. Y. CIO Council; American Veterans Committee; International Workers Order; American Youth for Democracy; United Public Workers, CIO, and others.

The board decided the issue on the asserted ground of maintaining free speech, ignoring the fact that Commu-

nists are free to hold meetings elsewhere than in tax-supported schools; also ignoring the fact that Communism is no mere domestic political party but is a foreign conspiracy to overthrow our government by force.

After the vote, the Catholic War Veterans and others demanded a sweeping investigation of the Board of Education by Mayor O'Dwyer. National Economic Council has lodged strong protests.

#### "ALERTNESS CREDITS" PROTESTED

NEC has also protested to the Board of Education of New York City granting of "alertness credits" to city-employed teachers for attending lectures given by the "American Russian Institute," widely believed a Communist propaganda-front. In a strongly worded letter sent Oct. 27th to Andrew G. Clausen, Jr., board president, NEC President Merwin K. Hart wrote: "We... consider granting of alertness credit to teachers for attending lectures of a Communist Propaganda organization as a very grave matter indeed." The letter also inquired as to who had passed upon the granting of such credits, and what action the board proposed to take.

As ACTION REPORT goes to press, no reply has come from the Board of Education.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO

If you live in New York City, express your views to the Board of Education, 110 Livingston St., Brooklyn 2, N. Y. If you live elsewhere, inquire whether similar conditions exist in your schools. If they do not, commend those in charge. If they do, get others to join with you in taking action.

Communists and their friends work so quietly that you cannot be sure what they are doing in your schools unless you take the trouble to find out.

## LEFTISTS DEFEND TARSHIS BOOK

### Smear-Sheet "In Fact" Attacks NEC

If alert observers were awaiting left-wing reaction to the NEC exposure of *The Elements of Economics*, by Lorie Tarshis, they got their answer at the turn of the month in the weekly smear sheet called *In Fact*, edited by fellow-traveler George Seldes. For the real character of that sheet, refer to the reformed ex-Communist editor, Louis Budenz, who has testified that Seldes was offered the editorship of the Communist official organ, the *Daily Worker*. Seldes follows the Communist line in dubbing all anti-communists as "fascists." Said *In Fact* for Oct. 27th:

"That great guardian of democracy, Merwin K. Hart, Franco apologist and founder of the native fascist Nat'l Economic Council, objected to a college text, 'The Elements of Economics' by Prof. Lorie Tarshis of Stanford Univ., published by Houghton, Mifflin Co. It bears not only a 'communist taint,' Hart said, but is also 'Keynesian!' The result: it has been banned from several colleges and also by the Coast Guard Academy at New London, Conn."

Seldes complains bitterly against the influences he claims have prevented publication of two books he favors. One is a book on "native fascism," by O. John Rogge, former assistant Attorney General, prosecutor in the so-called "sedition trial." Last year he was fired suddenly by Attorney General Clark. Since then he has blossomed out as lawyer for *In Fact* and for the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee, a Communist front whose officers were recently convicted of contempt of Congress.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO

Find out if schools in your town are using *In Fact* as source material for students, under the mistaken impression that it is an impartial, news letter.

## BIRKHEAD ASKS FEDERAL BUREAU OF PROPAGANDA

L. M. Birkhead, executive secretary and "main sparkplug" of "Friends of Democracy" whose publications have long called patriotic Americans "native fascists," has now come up with a proposal which would be acceptable either to real fascists or to communists, but hardly to real Americans. He advocates establishment of a vast federal propaganda organization. Representing himself as taking the middle of the road between Communism and Fascism, he said in *The Christian Register*, for September:

"A short time ago, I wrote President Truman urging that the Chief Executive propose the establishment of an effective, democratic Information and Propaganda Department within the government to combat and counteract the propaganda efforts of the extremists."

Though admitting that "propaganda can be the tricky, dangerous instrument of evil," Birkhead envisaged a Federal propaganda agency which would sell its brand of "democracy" to the American people "with hundreds of millions annually at its disposal." He said that "Private Enterprise today is performing the task in a necessarily limited way."

If America is to take this long step toward totalitarianism in the name of "democracy," observers were quick to point out, we shall need an American Joe Goebbels to head it up. And who could fill the job better, they asked, than the author of the Great Proposal himself?

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

Write President Truman yourself, telling him what you think of the proposal to ape Nazi Germany and Communist Russia by establishing an "Information and Propaganda Department within the government."

### Action Report

will be published the fifteenth of each month. If you wish extra copies we shall be glad to send them on request. Two copies free, 10 for 25c, 50 for \$1.

## Straws in the Wind . . .

What is behind the announcement that the American Communist Party will not formally affiliate with the the new "Cominform"—the out-from-hiding Comintern—recently announced by the Communist parties of Europe? No informed person imagines that it indicates any independence among American Communists, whose every move is dictated from Moscow. Perhaps the clearest explanation is given by Columnist Dorothy Thompson.

The role of American Communists, she says, must be different from that of European Communists. In Europe they can boast of their strength, and promise rewards for cooperation with Russia. In America, however, they must aid the Soviet strategy of weakening America within, and this depends upon the public being unaware of their strength. "The American Communists," says Miss Thompson, "can only attempt to conceal their role of reducing the world's premier power to helpless impotence. Therefore, while other Communist parties boast of their power, the American Communist Party must appear as a weak, helpless victim of 'fascism,' 'hysteria,' and 'witch hunting.'"

The "Society for the Prevention of World War III, Inc." furnishes an interesting example of left-of-center strategy. While there is no available evidence whatsoever that this strategy stems from Moscow, yet nothing in the Society's propaganda would tend to make any member of the Soviet Politburo unhappy. The thesis: World War III, if it comes, will be with Germany (any Russian danger is simply ignored). Therefore Germany must be kept prostrate, a la the Morgenthau Plan. According to its platform (first adopted in Feb. 1945), "East Prussia, Silesia, the Ruhr, the Rhineland and the Saar shall be permanently separated from Germany. . . . No heavy industry shall be permitted to remain in Germany nor in German ownership. . . ." Among its sponsors are, the Rev. Henry A. Atkinson, the Rev. L. M. Birkhead, Louis Bromfield, Jo Davidson, Allan Nevins, Quentin Reynolds, William Jay Schieffelin, Robert St. John, Lisa Sergio, the Rev. Guy Emery Shipley, Rex Stout, Darryl F. Zanuck, Walter Wanger and Bartley Crum.

Recently the New York Court of Appeals (the State's highest court) handed down an opinion which in effect declares that it is defamatory to call anyone a Communist or even to say that he has Communist leanings. Truth, of course, would be a good defense if libel were charged. . . . A number of years ago the United States Supreme Court, speaking through Justice Frankfurter, said that to call a man a Fascist was not defamatory in itself, but simply a part of the ordinary give and take of modern politics. . . . Do our courts take one position about the charge of Communism and another toward the charge of Fascism?

Since the beginning of the war in 1939, the USA has given, net, to foreign countries, \$58,206,741,335. Of this sum, Soviet Russia received a mere \$11,681,393,782. It has paid back, in "reverse lend-lease," a total of \$2,219,000. This is \$1 returned for every \$5,310 sent. . . . The nearly twelve billions can be permanently entered in red ink. . . .

### Do You Need a Speaker?

NEC has established a Speakers' Bureau, staffed by able, experienced men and women who thoroughly understand the economic and social issues now confronting America. They are available to service clubs, veterans' posts, women's organizations, church societies, high school and college groups, and smaller gatherings. Please address your requests, at least one month before the date of your meeting, to: NEC Speakers Bureau, 7501 Empire State Bldg., New York 1, N. Y.